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NIGHT

Another day has ended and again
The fading emeralds of the quiet west
Grow dusky o'er the hill-top and the plain,
Dying along each drowsy vale and crest,
Where Earth lifts up her bosom to the breast
Of Night oncoming. Now once more she brings
To the least folded flow'r her primal rest,
Opens the mantle of her darkenings
And sprinkles the white dew from both her starry wings.

The moth and beetle, owl and flittermouse—
All creatures that do call the moon their sun—
Steal silent forth, each from his little house.
They mount and fly, and others creep and run,
Where fox and hare and brock have all begun
The task of living. Now alert, awake,
They seek their joy and substance; every one
Pads out into the dingle, heath and brake;
While hungry fishes stir the silver of the lake.

For servants of the day another boon
Brings Night, and as the working hours decrease,
Lifts up her evening star and sickle moon
To disenthral, unfetter and release;
Bidding the long-drawn tale of labour cease.
She comes with twilight healing for each smart
Of soul and body, lays her unguent peace
With fingers cool on every aching part;
Anoints the tired flesh, soothes the dayfounded heart.

She asks no worship from our drooping eyes;
She needs no prayer to minister our plight;
Hers not our little deeds and destinies,
But still to smooth the pillow, lower the light;
Play nurse for every world-awearied wight;
Comfort and succour; at a touch redeem;
And pour her ancient anodyne of might:
Omnipotent sleep, inviolate, supreme,
Insensible as death, without one sigh or dream.

EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

Torquay, England.